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## TEXAS IN 1820

TRANSLATED BY MATTIE AUSTIN HATCHER

I. REPORT ON THE BARBAROUS INDIANS OF THE PROVINCE OF TEXAS<sup>1</sup>

BY JUAN ANTONIO PADILLA

These Indians, who are scattered over the immense territory lying between the 27th and 45th degrees north latitude and from the shores of the Gulf of Mexico to the Province of New Mexico, are known by different names. In obedience to superior orders, I describe their customs, habits, and modes of life, giving a concise statement of each one of the best known tribes, to whom is given the title of nations; and, for greater clearness, I will divide them into friendly and hostile groups.

*Friendly Nations*

The friendly nations are the Cadó, or Cadodachos, Yuganí, Nacogdochitos, Aizes, Vidaizes, Alibamó, Conchaté, Cható, Chatá Orcoquisac, Nacazil, Cocos, Sn. Pedro, Texas, Quichas, and Nadacos.

## Cadó

In this tribe, there is a leader or chief called a *Gran Cadó*, whom nearly all the friendly nations recognize as a superior. This office is usually hereditary, and holds its titles or commissions *con medalla* ever since the time when Louisiana was a Spanish possession. Considering the fact that they are heathens, the moral customs of these natives are good, since they are not ambitious like the Comanches nor deceitful like the Lipanes. They live by farming and hunting. From the former industry they obtain large quantities of corn, beans, potatoes, and other vegetables which are sufficient for their families; and from the latter they obtain a large supply of furs from the bear, the deer, the beaver, the otter, and other animals. These they carry to Natchitoches and exchange for carbines, munitions, merchandise, tobacco, and firewater, of which they are very fond. Their houses are of

<sup>1</sup>From the Austin Papers, University of Texas.

straw, some are of wood, but all are well built. They enjoy social intercourse, dislike theft, and treat Spaniards well, entertaining them in their houses and aiding them in every possible manner. They are faithful in keeping their contracts; for the merchants of Natchitoches advance them munitions, trifles, and liquors at a good rate of exchange for furs. For all these they pay punctually, in spite of the fact that there are among them foreigners who come from Natchitoches and other points of the United States for the purpose of trading their wares to the said Indians for their products. Still, there are some swindlers and scoundrels who do not pay the debts they contract. Their language, like that of all barbarians, consists of a small number of words. They use signs and gestures with the spoken word. The dialect is difficult and almost identical with that of nearly all the friendly nations—they themselves alone know how to distinguish the different dialects. Their knowledge is reduced to a small number of ideas so that they can barely judge of the present; and, although they remember the past, they scarcely ever provide for the future for the purpose of bettering their situation and of becoming more civilized. But due to their continuous trade with foreigners, it seem that they should not be called absolutely barbarous or savages. They, of all the Indians, perhaps, are the most civilized. They have no recognized religion, and it may be said that they are idolaters on account of the superstitions they make use of individually and at their dances and festivities. They have an idea of God, and confess him to be the author of all creation. But their errors, resulting from these false ideas inherited from their ancestors, are many. Only the light of the gospel, spread by the holy zeal of the priests dedicated to this benevolent work can destroy them. They marry by contract with ridiculous ceremonies. When a man's wife dies, he marries again. They have a knowledge of many medicinal herbs which they use for wounds and other accidents with good results; although, in their method of cures, there is always present superstition and excesses. At their dances, they drink great quantities of fire-water—some of them drinking until they tumble over. In these gatherings, there are never lacking some disorders resulting in personal injuries because of their drunkenness. They raise hogs, chickens, and dogs, and have horses and mules to make their

journeys and hunting trips. This tribe is composed of about two thousand persons of all classes and sexes. Because of the commerce they have with foreigners, many of them have learned the French language, and a few the Spanish, poorly pronounced. They pierce their noses and wear pendant silver ornaments of different kinds. They shave a part of their heads with razors, and paint their faces with vermillion and charcoal. They live in the neighborhood of the Spanish Lagoon, a very large, navigable lake connected with the Colorado river of Natchitoches, and extending almost to Vallupier, a settlement of Frenchmen, located on a small *arroyo* of this name, but which is subject to Spain. At the present time they are in the Neutral Ground.

#### Yuganís

The Yuganís, who live to the east of Nacogdoches, on the Neches river, at a distance of about thirty leagues, have the same customs and inclinations as the Cadó. They differ from them in being a little darker and in shaving their beards in streaks with lancets, using charcoal. It is a small tribe not exceeding 150 persons. They live by hunting and planting grains. They are poorer than the Cadó. They are very sociable Indians and very docile and primitive.

#### Nacogdochitos

The Nacogdochitos are near neighbors of the Yuganís, living on the same river, Neches. They are very much like the latter except in the streaks they make on their faces. They are much more given to drunkenness than the Yuganís, and consequently much poorer; although they do not fail on this account to till the soil, to construct houses, and to hunt. They number about two hundred.

#### Aizes

The Aizes live toward the northeast upon the *arroyo* Atoyak and about twelve leagues from Nacogdoches. They are very much like the Cadó, differing from them only in language and in the manner of shaving their heads. They number about three hundred Indians. They pierce their noses and paint their faces with vermillion. They are fond of the Spaniards.

## Vidaizes

The Vidaizes live on the Trinity, below the abandoned village of the same name, about fifteen leagues to the east a little to the south. They number about three hundred Indians. They go down to Natchitoches to exchange their furs. They cultivate the soil. They treat the Spaniards well when visiting in their *pueblos*. Their customs are like those of the Cadó.

## Alibamó

The Alibamó live in three *pueblos* in the same direction on the said river at no great distance from the Vidaizes. They number about six hundred Indians. They are liberal and industrious and indulge in hunting, by which they gain their livelihood. They go down to Nacogdoches with their furs which they exchange like the other Indians. They use firewater, and paint their faces. They are kind, and their customs and inclinations are not barbarous; although they are superstitious like the other Indians.

## Conchaté

The Conchaté live further down on the same river and toward the east. They number about five hundred Indians. Their customs and inclinations differ in no way from those of the other tribes referred to, although they are found to be more given to the use of firewater. Some of them are seen to be gayly adorned with the plumage of birds on their heads, dressed in flowered chintz shirts, their faces painted with vermillion, and with silver pendants hanging from their noses. They have considerable trade and are great hunters without neglecting to cultivate the soil. They trade in furs with the foreigners from whom they receive merchandise and other things they may need.

## Cható y Chatá

The Cható and Chatá, who live on the Sabine river, not very far from the sea, look very much like the Conchaté so far as adornment goes. They are also given to drunkenness. Many of them know French. Their customs are like those of the Cadó. Their trade in furs, with the foreigners, is considerable. These people, who live very near neighbors to each other, number about

eight hundred persons. They till the soil and live in houses of wood.

#### Orcoquisac

The Orcoquisac are located at the mouth of the Trinity river. They number about three hundred Indians. They resemble the Yuganís; although they do not streak their faces. Their occupations are limited to hunting and farming. They go down to the seashore from whence they secure the fragments of ships and other things cast up by the sea. They know how to manage a canoe, and they are excellent swimmers. They carry their furs to Carcashú and Oppelousás to exchange with foreigners who live in those settlements, which are under the jurisdiction of the United States, and which are not far from the coast. Their customs are very good, although idolatrous. They performed many services for the troops who were stationed at Atascocito, also called Orcoquisac, until the year 1812, when the frontier was abandoned.

#### Nacazíl

The Nacazíl live on the Neches river near the lagoons where it empties into the sea. They number about two hundred. Their customs are simple. They are fond of hunting and of farming. They frequent the sea coast and visit Atascocito when troops are stationed there. They are skilled in the management of canoes, and they go in them to Oppelousás and Carcashú with their products. They drink all kinds of liquors, of which they are very fond.

#### Cocos

The Cocos, who number about four hundred, seldom leave the coast between Bahía de Matagorda and the mouth of the Brazos river where they live without any fixed habitation. They live on fish and wild game; and, because of the little traffic they have with foreigners, they are without necessities and ornaments. However, they trade with the neighboring tribes. Their customs are not very different from those of the other Indians. By nature, they are tractable. They look like the Yuganís.

#### Sn. Pedro

The Sn. Pedro Indians live on the Trinity river above the abandoned village of this name, to the northeast, about twenty

leagues. They plant crops and hunt. They have good inclinations and simple customs. They do not shave their faces, although they cut their hair in such a way as to make them different from the Texas Indians, their neighbors. They rarely go down to Natchitoches, but there is no lack of foreigners who carry merchandise to the *pueblos*. They are but little addicted to firewater. They are liberal and generous with what they have. They build their houses of straw because it is easier than wood. But their houses are large and usually neat. This tribe consists of about five hundred persons.

#### Texas

The Texas are near neighbors of the Sn. Pedro Indians, living on the said river and in the same direction. There is a great similarity between these two tribes and the difference can scarcely be distinguished, except by the way they cut their hair and by the name. They number about four hundred Indians. They are fond of hunting, but they till the soil. They are like their neighbors, the Sn. Pedro Indians, and rarely go down to Natchitoches.

#### Quichas

The Quichas live toward la Tortuga, which is in a northerly direction, about fifty leagues from Trinidad. They differ but little from the Texas and the Sn. Pedro Indians. They employ themselves in farming and in hunting wild animals. They are in the habit of going to Trinidad, but their usual trips are made to Natchitoches, although foreigners do not fail to come to their *pueblos* because it is on the road to the Comanches and Tehuacanos. They number about eight hundred Indians.

#### Nadacos

The Nadacos live on the Sabine river above the Cható and the Chatá Indians, and near the Cadó. They number about two hundred Indians. They are darker than the latter and some of them shave their faces in streaks. They plant considerable crops and are hunters. They have a close friendship with the Cadó, whom they ordinarily accompany on their hunting trips. They are primitive and humane. They are given to the use of firewater because of their extensive trade with foreigners.

All these tribes, who live in the wooded region which lies between the Trinity river and the frontier of the United State, preserve reciprocally an inviolable peace and a perfect harmony. They, however, are strongly built, well developed, brave, and vigorous. They resist fatigue and the extremes of that changeable climate at all seasons; for they are accustomed to it. They have the particular distinction of not having joined the faction of the traitor Bernardo Gutiérrez, when, at the head of the Anglo-Americans and accursed Spaniards, he invaded the Province of Texas, having previously sent Spanish and French emissaries among them; that is, with the exception of the Conchaté who, with one hundred Indians of this nation, aided the traitors to carry the war in Bahía del Espíritu Santo and later at the battle of Rosillo; but when Gutiérrez's army had taken the plaza of Bexar and had beheaded the Spanish leaders and other officials, the Conchaté retired to their *pueblos*.

The ordinary dress of these nations is deer skins which they themselves tan. They also wear shirts of chintz or flowered goods. Their wives dress in the same way. Some of them have married foreigners. They are not so dirty nor so ugly. They might even pass as handsome, if they should be given a good and careful education—particularly the Cadó.

### *Hostile Tribes*

The hostile tribes are the Comanches, the Lipan, the Tancanhues, the Tahuayases, the Tahuacanos, and the Aguajes. They are scattered over the plains which lie between the neighborhood of New Mexico and the Province of Texas. The first three are wandering tribes, and the others live in fixed settlements on the rivers of Brazos de Dios and Colorado de Natchitoches. In their customs, they are very different from the tribes on the frontier; although, like the Indians, they farm and hunt.

### Comanches

The Comanches, who are the most numerous and who cover the greater part of that vast region toward the north, are treacherous, revengeful, sly, untrustworthy, ferocious, and cruel, when victorious; and cowardly and low, when conquered. They are inclined towards rapine and murder of their fellow-beings, spar-



ing the lives of the young and of the women in order that they may teach their wicked customs to the former and satisfy their lust with the latter. Like cowards, they mutilate the bodies of the dead and, sometimes, they eat their prisoners after torturing them to death. They are inconstant in their friendships and break their contracts for any cause. They are perfidious and disloyal. They love their liberty so much that they will not bear servitude; and to have peace with them it is necessary to subdue them by arms. It is certain that they are not reducible to the Catholic religion. Their ordinary food is the buffalo and other animals of the chase. They also eat horses and mules [even] when not forced to. They never plant any crops. Their sole occupation is hunting and war. The rest of the time they spend in idleness and crime. They live a wandering life and when they remain in one place it is only for ten or twelve days while their animals are grazing the land bare and they themselves are driving away all the game. Although there are chiefs among them, that is, one in each *pueblo*, who understands war, they respect and obey him when they wish, without noting him particularly. And if they follow him to war, it is because of the love they have for murder and theft. They preserve no order or formality in leaving him or in following him. And, although they also have certain battles in their *pueblos*, it is for the purpose of inciting them to war since that is the desire which dominates them. They have many wives, as many as each Indian can support. Some of them have as many as eight. They are not clean. They wear only a breechclout. For the rest, they go almost naked. Only in the winter do they cover themselves with buffalo skins, which they have tanned themselves. They have great skill in arranging their hair with paints and oils, adding to the mixture some artificial braids of horse hair tied with strands of cloth which almost reach to the ground. The greatest insult you can offer a Comanche is to pull his braids. They know no religion except idolatry with all the superstitions which the devil has suggested to them through their witches or magicians, who are not lacking among them. Their riches consist in the possession of good horses and arms, which they will not sell, even though they be paid an exorbitant price. They do not lack silver ornaments such as jeweled swords, and ornaments from bridles, which they steal in their expeditions and campaigns.

They have never made so many of these as in the last year, due entirely to the encouragement given them by the foreigners and certain perverse Spaniards because of their covetousness, to the detriment of the provinces, as is to be explained.

Up to the year 1811, the Comanches were not so well armed, nor so war-like, nor had they penetrated into places where they are now seen. The revolution which broke out in the center of the kingdom, at that time, came to the ears of those Indians; and, since they are of a war-like nature, changeable, and treacherous, it was easy to seduce them from their allegiance to the legitimate authorities. They took advantage of the occasion when they saw the troops with other duties, and hastened to make war against the unarmed herdsmen and the peaceable settler, robbing, killing, and seizing prisoners. In these raids, they collected a great number of animals both horses and mules, leaving horror and devastation in this industry in the Province of Texas and on the frontiers of the other Provinces. At the same time that the Indians laid waste the *haciendas* and ranches, the foreigners and various rebel Spaniards, who escaped from the victorious army of our sovereign at Medina, introduced munitions and other things to exchange for animals, making a well worn road through the unsettled region towards Natchitoches. There were not lacking some Spaniards, still worse, who led them and incited them to kill and burn whatever came in their way. With such guides, they penetrated to the Villa del Norte de la Colonia where these Indians never had set foot before. There is no doubt that they laid waste the country and terrorized the inhabitants; but they were not always free from punishment by the troops, who have defended their frontier, and who gave them battle, recovering the horses they had stolen and killing many of their warriors.

This nation is divided into the Yambaricas and the Yucanticas. The former live to the north and west from the plains at the headwaters of the rivers to the region near New Mexico. I do not know the number of people they have. They rarely go to the coast. The Yucanticas live from the country of the Yambaricas to the region near Texas. They have ten or twelve *pueblos* governed by the person most noted for bravery, intrepidity, and ferocity. Their number, counting both the western and northern branches, may be estimated at six hundred persons. They make

war against all the neighboring nations, and to free themselves from the Huasás (who live farther to the north and whom we do not know), who are said to be exceedingly swift in a race, they use the device of cutting off their horses tails. At the present time, they are at peace with the Lipanes, who have always been their bitter enemies.

#### Lipanes

The Lipanes unite all the vices of the Comanches with those peculiar to themselves—the quality of being very astute and daring in their hostile expeditions they have acquired from the long communication they have had with the Spaniards during times of peace. Therefore, to their natural barbarity, they add a considerable knowledge of the art of war. It has not been possible to induce them to live in fixed habitations. They love liberty and are greatly interested in their ideas of idolatry and heathen rites. They ordinarily live on game and wild fruits. They also eat horse meat when forced to do so. And, although they like Spanish cooking, they are not inclined to cultivate the soil. In times of peace, they live on the frontiers of Coahuila, Neuvo Reyno [de León] and Colonia [de Nueva Santander], pitching their camps as far as the Province of Texas. Many of them have learned to speak Castillian; although with a poor pronunciation, but they understand it very well. Their commerce is limited to tanned deer and buffalo skins which they paint with great skill. They also sell horses and mules which they take in their rounds-ups. They have many wives like the Comanches. They are given to lust and bestiality. This nation amounts to something like seven hundred of all ages and sexes. Many of them have learned to play cards, which they do with great skill.

#### Tancahues

The Tancahues live a wandering life on the margins of the Guadalupe, San Marcos, Colorado, and Brazos. In customs, inclinations, and modes of living, they are very similar to the Comanches and the Lipanes, of whom they are sometimes enemies. They are not so warlike as those Indians, but they are not entirely lacking in valor and disposition to carry on offensive warfare and to defend themselves. However, on the other hand, they are lazier and greater knaves—from this arises their want and

misery. They are but little inclined to the chase. They live mostly on wild fruits and fish. Their commerce is exceedingly meager because of their laziness and their scant traffic with foreigners. They are not so ferocious as the Comanches. They do not exceed five hundred in numbers. They are idolatrous and superstitious, and have many wives. They paint their faces and arms so as to form different figures, cutting themselves with lancets, and using charcoal. At present they are peaceable because of the war they are engaged in with the other nations.

#### Tahuacanos

The Tahuacanos live on the banks of the Brazos, on fixed settlements, towards the northeast, about ninety leagues from Bexar. They resemble other barbarians in their moral customs, but they differ widely from them in other things. They cultivate the soil from which they gather an abundance of fruits upon which they live, together with the products of the chase to which they are also inclined. When they are at peace with the Spaniards, they receive them and treat them kindly. They are superstitious and lovers of idolatry. They have many wives. They make war against the Comanches over buffalo hunting, and against the Tancahues for stealing their crops. Their huts are of straw, but of good size and clean and well shaped. They number about eight hundred persons. They live in three *pueblos*. They trade with foreigners from whom they receive arms, ammunition, tobacco, and other merchandise. This is why they are at war with the Spaniards. Their granaries are under ground. In them, they preserve their seeds for two years. They paint their arms and faces like the Tancahues, although they use different figures.

#### Tahuayases

The Tahuayases live on the river Colorado de Natchitoches, above this settlement. They do not differ very greatly from the Tahuacanos, whose customs and traits they share. Like the Tahuacanos, they cultivate the soil, and are fond of hunting by which they live. They make war against the Comanches and against other barbarous nations of the north. Their houses are like those of the Tahuacanos. Some are of wood. They are accustomed to go down to Bexar. Besides, they trade with other nations. Some of these Indians are white, due to their mixture

with foreigners, who are accustomed to visit their *pueblos* by way of the Colorado de Natchitoches in order to trade in furs. They number a little over one thousand.

#### Aguajes

The Aguajes live to the north of the Tahuayases. They are much like the Comanches in customs and habits. They trade their furs to foreigners and never visit Bexar because of the distance, and their occupation of war with the other hostile nations of the north. Their number reaches to a little more than eight hundred persons of all ages and sexes.

#### [Description of the Province of Texas]

The Province of Texas, whose inhabitants are the barbarians and wild beasts, with the exception of the people of Sn. Antonio de Bexar and the Presidio of Bahía del Espíritu Santo, the only settlements of Spaniards and they are but small, is a spacious and extensive territory. It has many rivers to water it. The principal ones are the Guadalupe, Colorado, Brazos de Dios, Trinidad, and Neches with the Sabine. Their are famous for their volume of water and length, along the course of which they receive a great number of rivers, *arroyos*, and springs. All these rivers empty into the Gulf of Mexico at different points; and, although there are no ports, so-called, navigation and use, aided by industry, would make them so in fact.

The land is extremely fertile, covered with all kinds of trees, especially from the Colorado river to the coast and the frontier of Natchitoches. There are immense forests of oaks, pines, cedars, and cypress of great size along the plains, for the mountain regions are unknown. It produces, in great abundance, all kinds of cultivated and wild plants, roses, and aromatic and medicinal plants, like the *cisperina* and others. In the woods of Nacogdoches, there is a tree from whose sap is secured sugar as good as that from the cane. On the banks of the Sabine there are chestnuts, pine-nuts, and other fruits. Medlar-trees are common and nuts are abundant. Near Bexar, they gather apricots of as good flavor as those under cultivation. In all the rivers, *arroyos*, and springs there are abundant quantities of fish and other products of different kinds. Fine pearls are found in some of them, and in all of

them there are the greatest commodities and advantages for the establishment of *haciendas*, and *pueblos* of great importance. Toward the north, on the Colorado river there are *minerals* known to the Indians but not worked. Cattle, horses, mules, irrigable and non-irrigable lands are afforded to the admiration of all who have seen them, but all under the domination of the barbarians. To the north of Bexar, and for a considerable distance, the climate is very healthful because of the altitude of the country and the purity of the air. Toward the coast and frontier of Natchitoches it is subject to chills because the country is so low, so covered with vegetation—some of its being marshy—rainy at all times and especially during the rainy seasons.

On the San Antonio river at Bexar there are four missions which the priests of *la propaganda fide* of the college at Zacatécas had held. They are Purísima Concepción, San José, San Juan Capistrano, and San Francisco de Espada.

That of Concepción, distant one league from Bexar, has a church of hewn stone carefully constructed with arches, although it is in a bad condition because of damage by time. It has deteriorated considerably because of the absence of the priests and natives. The buildings of the convent and the other offices are in the worst condition. Of other buildings, there remain only heaps of rubbish. This mission has a large irrigating ditch, although not in use now. With it they irrigated a considerable piece of land from which they gathered crops of all kinds. For three years some citizens of Bexar have been planting these *labores*, but without irrigation since their poverty will not permit the expense of rebuilding the dam and cleaning the ditch. But, because that land is so rich, they have not lost their labor.

The mission of San José is one league from Concepción. It has a chapel which is well built of hewn stone although it is damaged by time through lack of repair. It owns rich ornaments, sacred vases, and much silver set with jewels and ornaments. All these show its former splendor and riches. The convent has a portion which is threatened with ruin. As for the rest, some have fallen down and others are poorly repaired by certain *vecinos agregados*. There are also some casts among the descendants of the Indians who formerly inhabited it. It has a large irrigating ditch and a considerable quantity of farming land which is cultivated with great success by these citizens. In this mission there

is no lack of priests, for it has usually been the residence of the president of all the missions.

The mission of San Juan is a league from that of San José. Many *vecinos agregados* have lived in it for many years. The church is unfinished, although it has a chapel in which mass is said. Its buildings are almost demolished, and the best of them are in poor repair. It has an irrigating ditch and farm lands of which the settlers avail themselves.

At an equal distance is the mission of Sn. Francisco de la Espada, settled by a small number of persons, as in the former cases. Its buildings are in a similar state. Although it is eleven years since the death of Fr. Pedro Noreño, the last priest it had, the water for irrigation is still abundant and the farm land considerable in quantity and rich in quality.

These four missions are in a state of decadence for lack of repair of the buildings. Each of them, at small cost, would support a settlement of Spaniards if the lands, water, and ruined buildings were divided among those who would voluntarily present themselves as the first settlers. None of them have any Indian settlers, the principal object of their establishment. If there are any, they are but few in number and changed into casts by mixture with the settlers of Bexar. Those who are there have lived in the character of *arrimados* so that his Majesty has had to pay the stipend of the priests without securing the execution of his royal will which is the conversion of the Indians.

From the settlement of these missions, there would follow the advantage of increasing the population of that deserted province. The troops would have better means for securing the supply of things they use, and the settlers would secure advancement. They would aid each other mutually in their work for the preservation of the missions and in the defense against the barbarians.

Juan Antonio Padilla.

Villa de Mier, December 27, 1819.

II. INSTRUCTIONS WHICH THE CONSTITUTIONAL AYUNTAMIENTO  
OF THE CITY OF SAN FERNANDO DE BEXAR DRAWS UP IN ORDER  
THAT ITS PROVINCIAL DEPUTY MAY BE ABLE TO MAKE  
SUCH REPRESENTATIONS, TAKE SUCH STEPS, AND  
PRESENT SUCH PETITIONS AS MAY BE CONDUCTIVE  
TO THE HAPPINESS, DEVELOPMENT, AND  
PROSPERITY OF ITS INHABITANTS<sup>2</sup>

The length of this province, from north to south, is about 300 leagues of known country from [the mouth of the] Nueces River to the ——— in the Province of New Mexico. From east to west, it is about 200 leagues from the Medina to the known limits of the Province of Nueva Viscaya at its union with the United States. In this region are seen the finest and most copious springs, rivers, lakes, and lagoons, which water it and furnish life to a great number of wild but very useful products—to numerous herds of animals, cattle, buffalo, and other kinds of wild creatures, which furnish the greatest aid to subsistence, to a large number of wild horses, to countless animals of the chase, and to fish, woods, and other valuable products which promise the benefits of the best mineral ores ever seen. There are 3000 persons in the province.

The settlements which the province contains in this spacious and extensive region are only the city of San Fernando de Bexar, its capital—to which are added the presidial company of Bexar, the flying squadron of San Carlos de Parras, and the four missions—almost abandoned, since in three of them are no more than fifteen Spanish families, and none in the other; the *presidio* of Bahía del Espíritu Santo near which also there are two Indian missions, almost abandoned, since the Indians live in them only during the seasons which suit them—these are all located upon the San Antonio river within the short distance of fifty or sixty leagues to the southeast; and, finally, the advanced and deserted *pueblo* of Nacogdoches on the frontier of the United States toward the east. This is distant from the other settlements 180 leagues. The remainder of this extensive, immense, and spacious region composing the entire province is occupied by the different tribes of barbarous Indians, who, at all times, have been masters of the possessions and lives of the unfortunate inhabitants—but never with such tenacity and frequency as since the year 1813, at which

<sup>2</sup>From the Bexar Archives, University of Texas.



time, after they had made away with the cattle, horses, and other property of the inhabitants within the space of a few days, killing and capturing a considerable number of persons of all ages, conditions, and sexes, they continued menacing the interior of Coahuila, the colony of Nueva Santander, and a portion of the kingdom of Nuevo Reyno de León, in such a manner that the first of these and the four northern *villas* of the second suffered the same fate as Texas in regard to their property, although, without doubt, they have had a greater number murdered and captured among their citizens. And what nations are those who have occasioned such unheard of evils? They are no other than the Comanches and Lipanes. And we do not know the reason for such neglect and tolerance by the government in not suppressing them; because, if it is true that the Province of Texas needs for its security and that of the other Interior Provinces the total force of four or five thousand troops to guard the frontier of the United States, the coasts of the Bay of San Bernardo, and to repress the hostile nations which continue still to threaten it and who will frequent it again in the future for the same purpose, it seems an urgent necessity that it be given the following aid at once:

1st. By means of a respectable and well-organized campaign, the two nations, the Comanches and the Lipanes, who have occasioned so many evils in the province during these last years, should be followed until they are exterminated or forced to an inviolable and lasting peace, managing, if possible, to intrust the expedition to officials hardened to an active life, familiar with the country, and experienced in the methods of making war against this kind of an enemy. There is no doubt that this would serve as an example to restrain the other nations who, in imitation of these or in union with them, have contributed to the destruction of the province.

2d. The campaign concluded with the happy ending that we promise ourselves and have a right to expect if the troops assigned to it set out mounted, equipped, and supplied with every necessity, it is fitting that there be established a line of *presidios* to guard this frontier, extending from the old *presidio* of San Saba to that of Nacogdoches, establishing them with the necessary force—one at the above mentioned point, San Saba, another at San

Xavier, another on the Brazos, another on the Tortuga, another on the Trinity, and the last at Nacogdoches on the frontier of the United States. It would be well for the Province of Coahuila to settle or protect—by means of one or two presidios—the unsettled or unprotected country from San Saba to the *villa* of San Fernando de Agua Verde, as much for its own safety as for that of the two remaining provinces, the Colony [of Nueva Santander] and Nuevo León.

3d. This line established, it is proper that the coasts of the Bay of San Bernardo be protected by one or two *presidios* which could be, and should be, established at Atascocito and half way between the Brazos and the Colorado rivers.

4th. For all these establishments, there are judged to be very indispensable and very necessary two thousand soldiers, with full pay and other necessary supplies, in order to attract to the settlement all kinds of people useful in these lands.

5th. To all these new establishments, as advantageous as well as fitted for the peace and safety of this and the three neighboring settlements [the settlers] should give assistance, in order that they may be effective, since they would be interested parties in the benefits which must accrue to them, contributing aid according to their means, so that in the future the evils which they are now suffering may not be experienced. [To all these new establishments], it is very advisable that there be sent out as garrisons the three flying squadrons of the Colony [of Nueva Santander], [the flying squadron] of Laredo, and that from Punta Lampasas, the presidial companies of Monclova, and Rio Grande, the veteran companies of Bexar and Bahía del Espíritu Santo, and the flying squadron of San Carlos de Parras—composing the total number of — troops and the remainder to the number of 2000 should be selected from the militia of the Colony [of Nueva Santander] and Nueva Reyno de León.

6th. [We recommend] that the Port of Matagorda be aided, protected, and developed with everything necessary, in accordance with the royal orders promulgated by means of proclamations within and without the kingdom in the year 1805—the original of which should be in the archives of the captaincy general which was located at Chihuahua, from whence it may be secured. The copy of the royal order which was published here was lost during

the upheaval which the archives of this capital suffered during the revolution.

7th. That the Province of New Mexico, El Paso del Norte, and other palces in Neuva Viscaya be placed in communication with this province, aiding these places with some settlements or *presidios* which may be established in the short distance of 150 leagues existing between its capital, Santa Fé, and this [capital]. By this means, its inhabitants, in addition to the benefits and advantages which would result to all the kingdom, can have the privilege of importing the goods they need and of exporting the grain and other products from their territory through the said port of Matagorda in the Bay of San Bernardo, as was requested in 1812 by their deputy to the córtes, Don Pedro Baptista Pino.

8th. That all the supplies of grain, stock, and other things furnished from the year 1813 to the past year of 1819 by the citizens of this place be paid for as soon as possible in order that, in this way, they may be repaid in part for their losses and arrears from which they have suffered and so that with it they may improve their fields and the industries they may seek to promote.

9th. That restitution be made of the houses, fields, and other property which still remain unsold from those confiscated from the citizens of this place who, in the above mentioned year of 1813, fled to the United States, doing the same with the estates sold or ceded when claims are made to them by their original and legitimate owners according to the constitution which was in force at that time. Difficulties must arise in this restitution. These will be solved by returning to the purchasers what they gave [for the property], leaving to them the inalienable right to put in a claim for the improvements which they have made.

10th. That there be distributed *sitios de tierras valdíos* and *labores* for the inhabitants of the entire province upon the rivers, San Antonio, Medina, Guadalupe, San Marcos, Colorado, San Saba, and others suitable for the proposed purpose, distributing, also, the *labores* which belong to the four abandoned missions near this capital, except those of the mission of Concepción, which should be reserved for *propios y advitrios* for the city which lacks funds for its needs; for, since its foundation it has had no other available funds save seventy *pesos* annually yielded by the fifth of a *labor* called *propios* which scarcely meet the expenses of the festivity of the Holy Patron and compensate a secretary. Al-

though, before the revolution, we counted upon the funds from the *mesteñas*—which amounted to from fifteen to eighteen thousand *pesos* and upon the fund from the *publico* which amounted to two or three thousand *pesos*—they were never set aside for public use but, in the end, the governor took possession of them for the use of the troops of this garrison, for whom they were expended. They can be reclaimed from the amount due the troops in the treasury until April 1, 1813, when were mustered out the flying squadron of Bexar and of Alamo de Parras, the militia companies of Texas, and the auxiliaries of the Colony [of Nueva Santander] and of Neuva Reyno de León, to whom the funds were paid, as the paymaster of the company of Bexar, at that time, Alferez Don Manuel Delgado, who is in that city, can inform you. The necessary evidence cannot be sent from here, because, during the revolution, the accounts, books, and other documents which were in the chest of said fund of *mesteñas y publico* were lost.

11th. That for the purpose of raising new funds or for increasing those collected, there should be placed at the disposal of this *ayuntamiento*, with exact notices and reports, the proceeds from the cattle, horses, and mules of unknown owners collected since the year 1814 or 1815 up to the present time. This account must be in possession of the governor of the Province of Texas or that of the paymaster of Bexar. The cattle, horses, and mules of this character should remain at the disposal of this body, of the *sindico procurador*, or of the treasurer who may be selected, in order that, having been sold to the highest bidder within the time that may be considered proper, the resulting proceeds shall be applied to the *fondo de propios* of this city which, until now, amounts to nothing. Consequently the *ayuntamiento* lacks funds for its necessary activities. The citizens should be permitted to round-up wild horses. This by order of the Commandant-General, Don Joaquin de Arredondo, they are prohibited from doing, because it is alleged that they wish to make this their sole occupation. The old established custom should be enforced of paying two *reales* per head, and of rounding them up only in the months from November to February or March. This rule should apply to the soldiers as well as to the civilians.

12th. That the system in practice since the above mentioned

year of 1813 to the present time of maintaining in the province a strong garrison of troops useless for performing the active services of their calling which the circumstances of the day demand, has been only a certain means of consummating the ruin of its inhabitants; for the soldier, finding himself unmounted, unclothed, and without supplies—what service can he perform and how can he exist with only two *almudes* of corn which he receives every fortnight, unless, in order to maintain himself, he lays hands upon some one's cow which he kills in the fields, now upon things which he steals from the corn fields, or now, by other excesses, such as necessity forces him to commit, as is frequently seen practiced upon the public who suffer these damages. This will be remedied by furnishing the soldier with sufficient and suitable rations or by arranging for him to retire to his own province in spite of the urgent need there is for them in this province and of the good which might result from their service, were they in the condition required for performing them instead of being forced to maintain themselves or live at the expense of the citizens.

13th. The Province of Texas is more than 500 leagues distant from the port of Vera Cruz—the first and foremost port of this America—something more than 300 leagues from the port of Altamira, eighty from the most advanced settlements of Coahuila and the Colony [of Nueva Santander] and 150 or 200 leagues from the *villa* of Saltillo and the city of Monterey; and there is in circulation in it no other money than the small salary which the troops receive some months. As a result of this, the goods and supplies which its inhabitants receive from such remote distances are held at excessively increased and exorbitant prices and with the stern necessity of paying for them in cash if some merchant does not graciously supply them in exchange for grain at a price which best suits him; for, if he pays 20 *reales per fanega* he, thereupon, resells it at from four to six *pesos* to the same person from whom he bought it if he cannot turn it over all at once in payment of the troops at the same or at greater profits. This is as injurious to the soldier as to the civilian; because, if they had money or if [the authorities] would observe some rule in supplying grain to the troops, they would be assured of their support with greater ease, and the laborers would be benefited and would devote themselves to their work with greater pleasure.

14th. Since the inhabitants of the province have within their midst a port so excellent as is the port of Matagorda, where at first and second hand the goods needed could be received with great ease and that too, perhaps, in exchange for the products of their own soil without the necessity of expending any money whatever, we can find no reason or justice to convince us that we should be deprived of a benefit which nature has so liberally bestowed upon us. For this reason, we repeat the request for the opening of the said port in order to destroy, at its roots, the odious contraband trade across the frontier of which some of the citizens of this place are accused. We have not yet seen progress made in this manner. Yet, if some practice it, it is not from ambition to accumulate riches, but because of the miseries they suffer and the ease with which they can relieve their sufferings by the sale of any kind of horses for which there is at least fifty per cent profit in current money or in very useful goods. In this way, they supply their necessities. And, if this is the only relief these inhabitants receive, there is no reason for depriving them of it by seizing upon the contraband goods they accumulate.

15th. The missions of this province contain only the small number of 278 inhabitants. These are governed by a local *alcalde*, appointed and approved by the government and subject in all matters to its authority and ministered by a priest from the College of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, with the rank of president who, since he has no assistance from his stipend for the purpose of providing for subsistence, is compelled to abandon the missions at certain times to obtain alms. The two priests who serve the missions of la Bahía del Espíritu Santo do the same thing. If they were paid the proper salaries, without doubt, they would dedicate themselves to their ministry.

16th. The branded horses which are captured from the Indians or from other enemies either by means of a campaign, a skirmish, or other military operation, should also very properly be turned over to the *sindico procurador* or treasurer who may be named, in order that he may hand them over to their owners or sell those without known owners for the benefit of the fund of *advitrios* which should be created in this city.

17th. If all and each one of the articles contained in these instructions be placed in execution and certain practice, we shall already have begun the prosperity of this province, the happiness

of its citizens, and the security of the kingdom of New Spain. This we can see accomplished in no other way than by seizing the happy moment which offers us national freedom; or we will be submerged in the confused, abominable, and horrible chaos of forgetfulness and abandonment.

November 15, 1820.

To the Governor to be sent to the Deputy for the Province,  
Don Ambrosia Aldasoro.